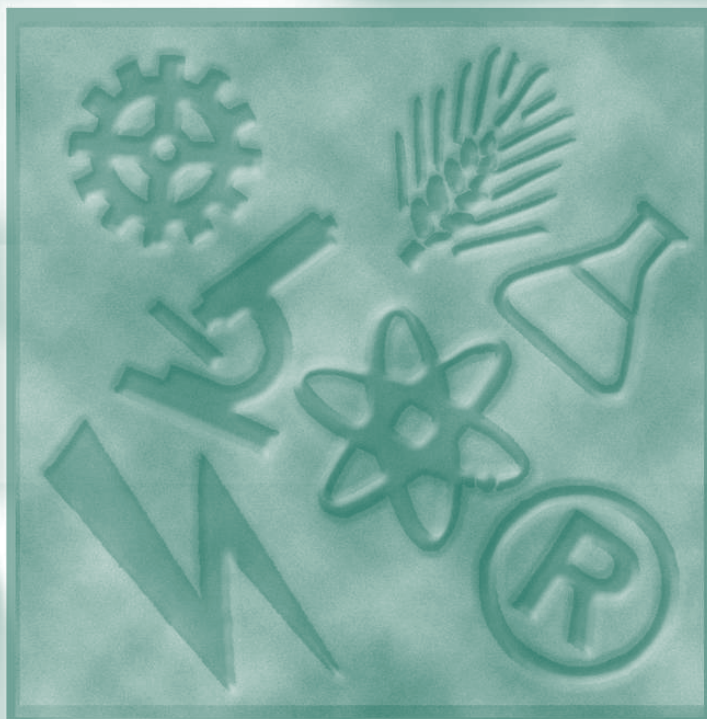


Customer Satisfaction Report



U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

As most of you know, I remain committed to providing a high level of service to all our customers. During the past year, I have continued to support the development and implementation of initiatives at the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) which will improve the quality of our customer service. I am proud of our continued efforts in this area.

For the fourth time, we are publishing our Customer Satisfaction Report, which outlines our standards and our performance against those standards. The standards were established based on input from our customers. We are reporting the results for each of our major business areas, which includes Patents, Trademarks, and Information Dissemination.

Overall customer satisfaction continues to increase for both Patents and Trademarks, and Information Dissemination customers remain highly satisfied. Since our 1998 survey, Patents showed an increase from 52% to 57% and Trademarks, from 63% to 69%. Seventy-five percent (75%) of customers also indicated that they are satisfied with IDO products and services.

In the area of Patents, it is important to note that the standards relating to "directing you promptly to the proper office or person" and "setting forth clear written communications" have each increased by 19% from our 1995 results. Also, since 1995, our standard for conducting a thorough search has increased by 16%. We continue to seek ways to improve meeting this standard via more effective training and also by conducting focus sessions with our customers to identify improvement strategies.

For Trademarks, the standard relating to "treating you with courtesy each time you contact us" increased by 7% since 1995 and the standard "setting forth clear written communication" increased by 12% since 1995. In addition, the standard for "directing you promptly to the proper office or person" increased by 11%.

As previously mentioned, I support the development of initiatives that will improve customer service and the quality of our work. One of the initiatives set forth this year, in an effort to develop an integrated quality system within the PTO, was the establishment of the Office of Quality Management (OQM). This office integrates the sharing of quality system goals and leverages resources to improve service to our customers. OQM also oversees the quality review of the work of patent examiners in Patents and of examining attorneys in Trademarks. Additionally, OQM supports improvements in customer service through the coordination of customer input activities such as focus sessions, surveys, roundtables and partnership meetings.

Filings in both Patents and Trademarks continue to increase at a very rapid rate. We issued our 6 millionth patent this year. This increase continues to put a strain on resources to meet the ever-growing demand for USPTO services. As a result, last year we hired over 800 new patent examiners and 136 new trademark examining attorneys.

In our first year of offering electronic filing of trademark applications through TEAS, the Trademark Electronic Application System, customer satisfaction has increased as cycle time has decreased for applications filed through TEAS. We initiated the pilot phase of electronic filing of patent applications and look forward to that having a positive impact as well.

In addition, in an effort to improve customer service, we developed automation capabilities to have all patents issued since 1976 and all registered trademarks and their applications freely searchable on the Internet.

It continues to be an exciting and challenging time for the USPTO with the passage of the 1999 enactment of the omnibus patent reform bill. This landmark legislation contains the most significant changes in our patent system since the passage of the 1952 Patent Act. The bill provides for the restructuring of the USPTO to a performance based organization—only the second one in the Federal Government. We believe that this legislation gives us the flexibility and independence to operate in a more business like manner, with greater autonomy over our budget, hiring, and procurement processes. These changes will help USPTO serve our customers more effectively and efficiently.

Since this report is one method for continuing to communicate our customer service efforts, we welcome your comments. You may contact us at:

United States Patent and Trademark Office
Center for Quality Services, PK 1-812
2011 Crystal Drive
Washington, DC 20232
Telephone: 703-305-4217
Fax: 703-305-8002

Q. Todd Dickinson
Under Secretary of Commerce for
Intellectual Property and Director of the
United States Patent and Trademark Office



Q. Todd Dickinson

Baldrige Helps to Establish Framework for Performance Excellence

In March 1999, the Office of Quality Management was established by Director Q. Todd Dickinson, who envisioned an integrated quality management system throughout the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO.) The Office of Quality Management (OQM) will guide the USPTO toward performance excellence through customer, employee, and organizational focus. The customer focus will support the Patent mission, *To Help Customers Get Patents*, by integrating customer expectations into patent processes, products, and services. The Office also supports Trademarks' goal, *To Enhance Trademark Protection*.

One of the first quality initiatives of OQM was to perform an organization-wide self assessment using the "Baldrige" criteria as a template. The Baldrige criteria are used as a metric by private sector businesses to assist them in becoming high performing organizations.

Some of the objectives for this assessment included:

- Determining how well the USPTO is currently performing against criteria for high performing organizations.
- Identifying and prioritizing actions needed to enhance performance.

Improve Customer Satisfaction

- Determining how well all parts of the organization are working together to achieve strategic objectives.
- Helping to align the many initiatives and processes to improve overall organizational performance and customer satisfaction.
- Serving as a working tool for understanding and managing performance, planning, and continuous learning.

A "Baldrige Assessment Team" was created and lead by the Office of Quality Management and the Quality Council (composed of representatives from all organizational components including Unions.) The team also included participants from the USPTO Maxwell School. (The Maxwell School is a certification program in Public Management offered through Syracuse University and administered at the USPTO.) All three groups received extensive training on the use of the Baldrige criteria.

The Baldrige team divided themselves into seven category teams to identify key data and information needed.



Commerce Secretary, William H. Daley, presents the 6 millionth patent to Alan Klesser of 3Com's Palm Computing while inventors Jeffrey C. Hawkins and Michael Albarese observe. Director Q. Todd Dickinson (far left) looks on.

These seven category teams included: Leadership, Strategic Planning, Customer and Market Focus, Information and Analysis, Human Resources, Process Management, and Business Results. The teams reviewed pertinent materials, interviewed key officials and employees throughout the USPTO, conducted followup interviews to clarify key points, and reviewed key performance and results measures from all business units.

The category teams identified several major strengths as well as opportunities for improvement. The "Vital Few" opportunities for improvement were identified as:

- Institutionalizing the overall USPTO strategic planning process.
- Developing an integrated customer complaint process.
- Integrating the broad variety of measurement data to conduct comprehensive cause/effect analyses.
- Aligning employee performance requirements with USPTO business goals.
- Developing a comprehensive feedback/action planning process for employee survey results.
- Deploying a systematic approach for the continuous improvement of key USPTO processes, including benchmarking and comparative analysis.

As the year 2000 unfolds, many of the "vital few" have become initiatives. For example, a database is being developed to enable the recording of customer complaints for identification of trends. A link from the USPTO Web site will permit customers to view the status of Baldrige Assessment Quality initiatives underway as well as survey results as they become available.

Customer Service Standards

Since our first customer service standards were published in 1994, we have validated these standards using customer satisfaction surveys in 1995, 1996, 1998, as well as in 1999. We continue to review and update the standards to help ensure that customer needs and expectations are incorporated.

Our current standards are:

USPTO-Wide Standards

We will ensure that our written communications clearly set forth the technical, procedural, and legal position of patent examiners and trademark examining attorneys.

We will treat you with courtesy each time you contact us and, where applicable, we will direct you promptly to the proper office or person.

We will widely disseminate information about changes in practice and procedures to ensure that both you and the USPTO employees know about changes prior to their effective date.

We will ensure calls to unavailable employees are returned by the next day or, if you request, an alternate point of contact will be provided.

We will respond to your status letters within 30 days from the date received in the USPTO.

Patent Standards

We will match your facsimile transmissions of properly addressed formal amendments with the appropriate files and deliver them to the examiner within 3 business days of receipt.

We will deliver your facsimile transmission of properly addressed papers marked "Informal" or "Draft" to the examiner within 1 business day.

We will conduct a thorough search of relevant U.S. patents, foreign patent literature, and nonpatent literature contained in the USPTO search files and, where appropriate, a reasonable search of other

nonpatent literature during the patent examination process.

We will respond within 30 days from date received in the USPTO to papers filed after the examiner allows the application and up to the time the USPTO receives payment of the issue fee.



A customer receives assistance from USPTO customer service representatives in the Office of Initial Pre-Exam.

We will correctly generate and mail a notice indicating the application number, date of filing, and the title of invention for complete, standard applications. These notices will be mailed within 30 days of receipt of the application in the USPTO.

Trademark Standards

We will set forth the determination of registrability accurately and clearly in office actions.

We will ensure the examination of procedural issues is accurate and office actions promote efficient and effective prosecution.

We will provide a first action regarding registrability within 3 months of filing.

We will provide a final determination regarding registrability within 13 months of filing.

We will mail the applicant's return postcard within 3 days of filing.

We will mail notices published by the USPTO within established times:

- Filing Receipts –
14 days (after receipt of application in the USPTO)
- Notices of Publication –
30 days (after file is approved for publication)
- Certificates of Registration –
7 days (after date of registration)
- Notices of Abandonment –
45 days (after date of abandonment)

We will respond to correspondence received from the applicant within established times:

Law Offices:

- Response to Amendments –
35 days from mailroom receipt date

Intent to use:

- Request to Divide –
30 days from mailroom receipt date
- Statement of Use –
30 days from mailroom receipt date

- Extension Requests –
30 days from mailroom receipt date

Post Registration:

- Section 7 Requests –
30 days from mailroom receipt date
- Section 8 Requests –
30 days from mailroom receipt date
- Section 9 Requests –
30 days from mailroom receipt date

We will issue USPTO products (Filing Receipts, Notices of Allowance, Official Gazette, Certificates of Registration, Notices of Abandonment) with correct information.

We will resolve problems experienced by customers in the processing of trademark applications or registrations within 7 days of notification.

We will provide clear and accurate answers to questions regarding the trademark application process through the Trademark Assistance Center.

Information Dissemination Programs

Search Services—Patents

We will maintain a Patent Search Room where:

- You will have access to paper documents that are accurately filed in a timely manner:

The *Official Gazette – Patents* and the numeric set of issued patents will be available to you on issue day. The location for classes and subclasses will be posted for your use within 24 hours from the time the class/subclass is relocated.

- You will have timely access to the automated search systems.
- You will have access to equipment for making quality copies of documents.
- You will be provided with effective assistance in using Search Room resources.

Search Services—Trademarks

- You will have access to paper documents that are properly categorized and accurately filed in a timely manner:

The *Trademarks Official Gazette* will be available to you on issue day. Bound volumes will be stamped within 5 days from receipt of information in the Trademark Search Library.

- You will have timely access to the automated search systems.



A new customer receives assistance at the Trademark Library.

- You will have access to equipment for making quality copies and documents.
- You will receive effective assistance in using Search Library resources.

Regional Search Services

We will enter into full partnerships with libraries to make patent and trademark information widely available to you throughout the United States.

We will enable the Patent and Trademark Depository Libraries to serve as our partners in disseminating intellectual property to you.

General Information Services

We will provide you with accurate, timely general information about the patent and trademark processes, products, and services, as well as information booklets.

We will mail forms to you within 2 days of receipt of your request.

Electronic Information Products

We will provide you with quality patent and trademark electronic information products according to a published delivery schedule.

We will provide you advance notice of product, price, and schedule changes.

We will develop new patent and trademark electronic information products to enable Patent and Trademark Depository Libraries to disseminate intellectual property information to you.

We will seek your suggestions for product and service improvements and will respond to you within 1 month.

OPR Service Standards

Document Services

Based upon the availability of media, we will fulfill requests for patent and trademark documents completely and accurately for—

Uncertified Documents, within:

- 1 day of receipt for orders received and returned with products via the Internet.
- 2 days of receipt for orders of copies of patents and trademarks.
- 10 days of receipt for orders of other uncertified patent and trademark documents.
- 25 days of receipt for patent and trademark file wrapper and contents or selected papers.

Certified Documents, within:

- 10 days of receipt for certified copies of other patent and trademark documents.
- 14 days of receipt for trademark registrations or within 5 days of receipt if expedited service is requested and fees paid.
- 17 days of receipt for patent and trademark applications-as-filed or within 7 days of receipt if expedited service is requested and fees paid.
- 25 days of receipt for patent and trademark file wrappers and contents or selected papers.

For a comparison of our performance with the established standards for the areas of Patents and Trademarks over the past 5 years, please see the charts found under the Measuring Customer Satisfaction section. Additionally, data on IDO performance for 1999 can be found in this section.

We will provide missing copies or replacement copies free, within 24 hours of customer request.

If we cannot fulfill your order on time, we will contact you by phone, fax, or e-mail early in the process cycle and explain in detail why your order may be delayed.

Assignment Services

We will accurately record and return patent and trademark assignment documents within 30 days of receipt in the Assignment Division.

Updates to Patents Records

We will process changes to automated records of patented cases and file the related papers in file wrappers within 30 days.



Customer gives demonstration of electric car invention to the USPTO employees.

Measuring Customer Satisfaction

Communicating With Our Customers

1999 was a very exciting year for all of us here at the USPTO as we developed some new methods for communicating with our customers. We expect that the beginning of this new century will provide an even greater opportunity for us to obtain customer input to improve the quality of our products and services. We continue to look for ways to improve the communication lines both formally and informally with our customer base.

This past year provided the opportunity for us to invite a variety of customers to various USPTO sponsored events. We conducted focus sessions and roundtables throughout the year, held Technology Fairs and Open Houses, and sponsored the Independent Inventors Conference. The quarterly meetings of the Biotechnology Customer Partnership not only continued, but attendance almost doubled from the previous year. Additionally, the partnership was the recipient of the Hammer Award (a Vice President Gore initiative) for the group's efforts in exchanging information with biotechnology patent customers and improving the patent process. These efforts resulted in significant cost savings. This year we also kicked-off the semiconductor and chemical-pharmaceutical customer partnership efforts.

The USPTO Web site (<http://www.uspto.com>) contains information of interest to the public and the intellectual property community. One of the most useful additions has been the searchable database, which contains patent bibliographic data and abstracts for all U.S. patents granted since 1976. Another communication addition to the Web site is "PTO Today," a new USPTO magazine also available as a paper subscription.

The traditional methods of communication with customers continue through publications, such as the *Official Gazette*, the *United States Patent and Trademark Office Review*, and the USPTO's Annual Report. Also, there are a variety of documents which can be obtained through our Web site.

The first Customer Service Office in a patent technology center was established over a year ago. Now

each technology center has a Customer Service Office staffed by customer service representatives. This effort is aimed at improving the quality and timeliness of service to customers in dealing with problems on specific cases and process problems in general. Our customers can continue to utilize the "hotlines" in both the Patent and Trademark business areas to address customer questions and provide ongoing assistance. Also, the General Information Help Line and Electronic Products Help Desk are additional sources that provide customer assistance.

Customer Surveys

We continue to use surveys to obtain information from our customers relative to our key products and services. This is the fourth time we surveyed Patent and Trademark customers for information concern-

ing the level and quality of service they are receiving. For the second year, customer satisfaction data were gathered and reported by patent industry technology areas. We are in the second year of conducting "in process reviews." These telephone surveys allow us to gather opinions from patent attorneys on the quality of the patent process and how well we are meeting customer service standards. The information gathered helps determine possible patent process changes and identify areas for improvement as well as areas where we are providing good service. (See pages 10-15 for data.)



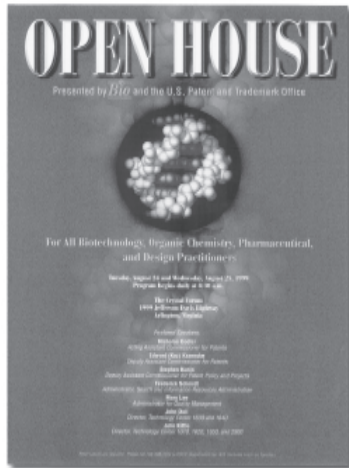
Director Q. Todd Dickinson and Don Kelly, Director of Office of the Independent Inventors Program at USPTO, greet inventors at the Independent Inventors Conference.

The Number for...

- Patent Assistance Center/
General Information
1-800-PTO-9199.
- Trademark Assistance Center
703-308-9000.
- Public Records
703-308-9726 or 1-800-972-6382.
- Electronic Products Help Desk
703-306-2600.

Building on Improved Customer Service Delivery

Our ongoing communications with customers through focus sessions and through customer surveys have identified the need for a variety of changes in service delivery and improvement initiatives. Many of these initiatives are underway while some are targeted for implementation in FY 2000.



Open Houses are Forums for communicating with USPTO customers.

more effective and efficient improvement of processes thus resulting in better service.

- Continuation of the Biotechnology Customer Partnership quarterly meetings which provide a valuable forum for sharing information, identifying problem areas, and finding solutions to problems.
- Establishment of the Semiconductor Customer Partnership in 1999. This group meets twice a year and produces a quarterly newsletter. Their goal is to create a partnership that will identify areas for improvement as well as provide opportunities for examiners to keep pace with the trends of this exploding technology.
- Continuation of the extensive review of examiner office actions by Quality Assurance Specialists with customer validation via telephone interviews.
- Launch of a series of focus sessions designed specifically to determine what characterizes a good search to improve search efforts during the examination process.
- Completion of customer service training for all Patent employees.
- Provision of customer service training to all new examiners/Patent employees.
- Award of 157 patent employees certificates for good service to customers through The Customer Recognition Program.

Patents

Patents will emphasize improvement in performance against six key standards: writing complete and clear office actions; matching properly addressed faxes with file and delivery to examiners within 3 days; directing customers promptly to the proper office or person; mailing correct filing notices within 30 days of receipt; conducting a thorough search during the patent examination process; and returning phone calls within 1 business day. Initiatives include:

- Passage of the *American Inventors Protection Act of 1999*. This Act protects inventors against deceptive practices of certain invention promotion companies; reduces patent filing fees by \$70 and patent maintenance fees by \$110; guarantees a minimum 17-year patent term by compensating applicants for the USPTO processing delays and for delays in the prosecution of applications; guarantees publication of applications 18 months after filing under certain conditions; and establishes a reexamination alternative that expands the participation of third-party requesters.
- Establishment of the Office of Quality Management to leverage the strength and expertise of all the USPTO quality resources, enabling

Trademarks

The Trademark business experienced one of its largest 1-year increases in application filings in FY 1999; an increase of 27 percent! At the same time, Trademarks focused on and met its 1999 goals to offer electronic filing to customers and to reduce pendency. Specifically, these improvements include:

- Provision of the option to file an application for a trademark registration electronically over the Internet with the Trademark Electronic Application System (TEAS). This year, the USPTO plans to have *all* of its trademark forms available for electronic filing over the Internet.
- Decline in pendency to first action from 7.2 months to 4.6 months, an improvement of 36% from 1998 to 1999.
- Availability of trademark application and registration status information to the general public over the Internet through the Trademark Application and Registration Retrieval (TARR) system. The site, which became available for customer use in March 1999, provides general trademark information and information for contacting the Trademark Assistance Center.

- Creation of a number of measures to focus on improving quality in three categories: legal, technical, and customer service. These initiatives include:

- ❖ High quality legal examination – We will accurately and clearly state, throughout the examination process, if a mark may be registered or not.
- ❖ Timely processing of trademark applications – We will determine registration within 13 months of filing, and we will issue USPTO notices in a timely manner.
- ❖ Accuracy of trademark products – We will issue notices with the correct information.
 - Filing receipts
 - Notice of Allowance
 - Notice of Abandonment
 - Certificates of Registration
- ❖ Effective handling of customer concerns – We will provide clear and accurate answers to questions regarding problems or delays in the processing of trademark applications.

Trademark business goals for FY2000 are to reduce trademark application processing time and to improve the quality of work through better processing methods and information technology. These goals are consistent with Trademark's commitments to reduce trademark processing time to first action, to offer the option of filing applications electronically, to make trademark status information available over the Internet, and to provide work-at-home opportunities to the trademark staff.

Information Dissemination

The Information Dissemination organizations focused their FY 1999 efforts on continually improving customer satisfaction, promoting the use and accessibility of their products, and delivering the highest quality information products and services. Some of the highlights of FY1999 include:

- Unveiled new Internet databases containing the text and images of more than 2 million patents dating back to 1976 and over 1 million registered and pending trademarks dating back to 1870. This

fulfilled the many requests for searchable patent full text and image databases received from customers.

- Improved the ease of customer ordering and delivery by providing an online ordering system that allows customers to place orders for office needs via the Internet, permit customers to check the status of their orders, and receive some products electronically.
- Improved regional access to patent and trademark information by designating two new Patent and Trademark Depository Libraries in May 1999. The Las Vegas-Clark County Library District in Nevada and the Rochester Public Library in New York joined the network of 85 PTDLs throughout the nation.

Providing high quality information products & services

- Opened the USPTO's third Partnership Library in Houston, Texas and designated a fourth one in Boston, Massachusetts. These libraries now join Sunnyvale, California and Detroit, Michigan in providing enhanced patent and trademark services to their communities.

- Completed the first full year of operation of the Enterprise Call Center infrastructure, processing 1,326,019 incoming calls. The telephone system provides faster

and more efficient processing of calls for general information, patent assistance, trademark assistance, and public records.

- Established a separate file copying area to improve the environment of the reference area in the Patent Search Room.
- Offered ten product titles on CD-ROM in fiscal 1999, satisfying many customer requests to make more information available in a variety of electronic formats.
- Kicked off the Year 2000 with "PTO Today," an online magazine. <http://www.uspto.gov>.

By September 2000, customers will be able to send assignment-related documents via the Internet directly to the Patent and Trademark Assignment System server for processing and recordation. We plan to send back recordation notices electronically to those who submit assignment-related documents electronically.

Success Stories

An attendee at the Biotechnology Customer Partnership meeting commented: "Thank you for providing this excellent forum to help us work more effectively and efficiently with the office. It is greatly appreciated by my clients and myself!"

A customer of the Office of Public Records, Document Dissemination Branch commented: "Your patent information services provided me a direct link to my great great grandfather. It is a wonderful service to provide a descendant with such a record of their ancestor's genius. I was immensely proud to receive these documents. Thank you. Your staff was very helpful and their enthusiasm was noted."

A user of USPTO's databases on the Web noted: "As a first time user of your Web site I was glad you made instructions clear and easy to understand — are you sure you're a government agency? I am also a novice with computers so I was very happy with my results. Thank you."

A caller to the General Information Help Line stated: "I am very satisfied with the overall service I was provided. The USPTO staff member was knowledgeable, courteous, and most importantly, I received a fast response both with my initial call and with my documents in the mail. Once again, thanks."

From respondents to the USPTO Customer Surveys:

"The Examiners are often eager to work with you and to explain their positions."

"Examining attorneys seem to make an effort to handle informalities over the telephone which often accelerates the registration process 6 or more months."

"The trademark examining attorneys are knowledgeable, helpful, friendly. They are proactive. They all care about the process, and about the ultimate client, the applicant! Far more helpful than the typical U.S. Government employee."

"I am pleased with the customer approach to processing patent applications as opposed to the previous, sometimes adversarial approach."

"Examiners seem flexible and interested in working with applicants to allow patentable subject matter to grant."

"Improvements in performance and professionalism among the USPTO examiners and staff have been noticeable over the last 5 years. Costs have also been managed well. We continue to be impressed by the quality of our patent office, particularly in comparison to some foreign patent offices where expediency, economy, and courtesy are seldom encountered."

"I have come to appreciate, recognize, and implement superior customer service. Knowing that superior performance and customer service exceeding customer expectations should not go unrecognized, I want to commend one of your patent examiners for his/her excellent people and professional skills."



Independent inventor displays replica of invention at the Independent Inventors Conference.

Attendees at the 1999 Independent Inventors Conference, held in Houston, Texas, made the following comments:

"I felt a new spirit of cooperation between inventors and USPTO."

"I'm more appreciative of the wonderful job that is being done."

"I was under the impression that the USPTO was not supportive of the independent inventor. I was wrong."

"This conference has been a wonderful resource for me."

1995, 1996, 1998, and 1999 Survey Results

Overall, 1999 customer satisfaction increased **significantly** from the previous two surveys for both Patents and Trademarks. Patents increased from 52% to 57% and Trademarks increased from 63% to 69%.

In Patents, there were some differences in the overall satisfaction levels with each of the technology areas.

Comparisons of 1995, 96, 98, & 99 Patent Satisfaction Levels With USPTO's Performance Against Customer Standards

Patent Standards	1995	1996	1998	1999
Overall satisfaction	50%	51%	52%	57%
Treat you with courtesy each time you contact us	73%	70%	78%	84%
Direct you promptly to the proper office or person*	44%	42%	52%	63%
Return telephone calls within 1 business day or provide another contact*	49%	47%	49%	58%
Set forth clearly in written communications, the technical, procedural, and legal position of examiners*	44%	40%	55%	63%
Respond to letters within 30 days of receipt	49%	44%	35%	38%
Widely disseminate information on changes in practices and procedures before their effective date	52%	55%	56%	56%
Deliver fax transmissions of properly addressed papers marked "Draft" to examiners in 1 business day	43%	37%	35%	42%
Match properly addressed fax transmissions of Formal Amendments after final rejection with the file and deliver to examiner within 3 days*	44%	40%	32%	41%
Mail correct filing notices for complete, standard applications within 30 days of receipt of application* **	42%	37%	16%	41%
Conduct a thorough search of all information*	48%	46%	57%	64%
Respond within 30 days to papers filed after the examiner allows the application and up to the time of receipt of issue fee payment	45%	41%	42%	54%

* Indicates a key driver.

** Standard changed from 19 to 30 days in 1999.

Note: USPTO converted to a 5-point scale with a neutral midpoint in 1999, so previous years' numbers have been adjusted to reflect that conversion.

The most notable increases from 1998 relate to timeliness standards, such as "respond within 30 days to papers filed," "direct you promptly to the appropriate person," and "return telephone calls within one business day."

There was an 11% increase in "direct you promptly to the appropriate person" and a 9% increase in "return phone calls." There were no significant declines in service.

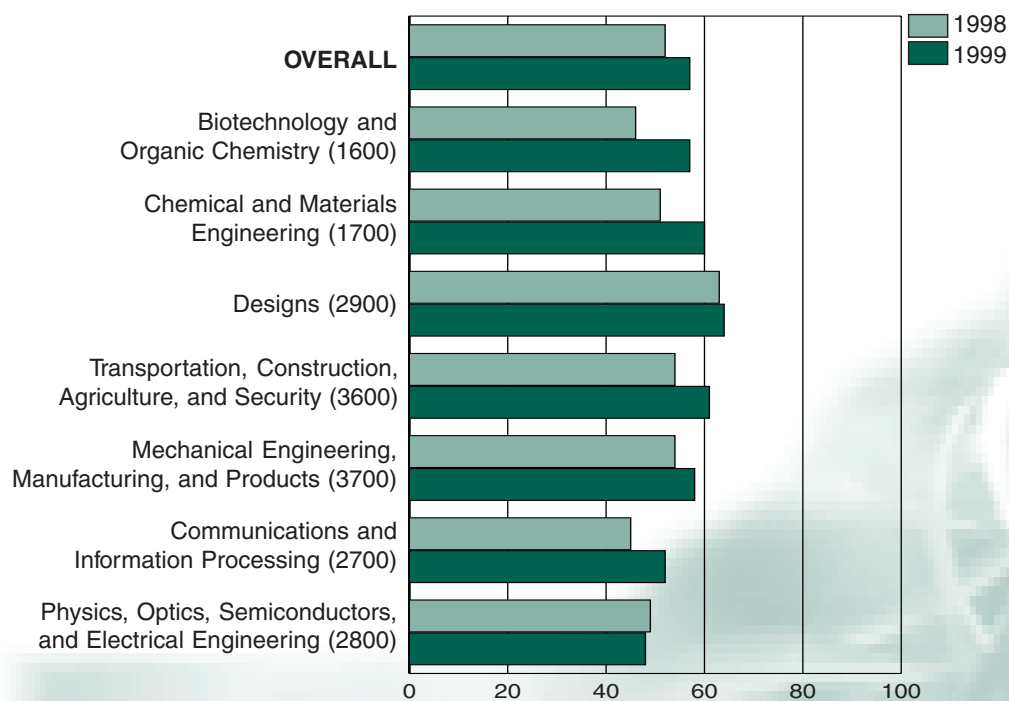
Comparisons of 1995, 96, 98, & 99 Patent Satisfaction Levels With Patent Process Categories

Patent Process Category	1995	1996	1998	1999
Amount of time needed to submit required information	61%	65%	66%	77%
Clarity of instructions	64%	66%	71%	77%
Length of application process	43%	38%	33%	45%
Cost of patent applications	22%	29%	31%	49%
Good value for the amount of USPTO fees paid for the application*				49%
Timeliness of patent grant	42%	37%	33%	34%
Outcome met your objectives	58%	61%	62%	67%
Fairness of decision	57%	54%	61%	67%
Ability to provide accurate answers to questions	52%	45%	51%	57%
Clear explanation about procedures	48%	44%	48%	47%
Assistance at a time convenient to you	56%	53%	55%	63%
Prompt and helpful service	49%	46%	49%	56%
Flexibility in trying to address your needs	43%	39%	44%	51%
Handling of delays	36%	31%	15%	24%
Handling of mistakes	37%	31%	21%	29%
Overall courteousness	66%	65%	64%	70%

* New category in 1999.

The most notable increases from 1998 relate to “cost of patent application,” an 18% increase, and “length of application process,” a 12% increase. There were no significant declines in customer satisfaction 1999.

1998-1999 Overall Satisfaction With Patent Process by Industry Sector



In Patents, the key drivers of overall satisfaction include the following six customer service standards:

- 1) Clear written communications of positions of examiners.
- 2) Match properly addressed faxes with file and deliver within 3 days.
- 3) Direct you promptly to proper office or person.
- 4) Mail correct filing notices within 30 days of receipt.
- 5) Conduct a thorough search.
- 6) Return phone calls within 1 business day.

In Trademarks, the key drivers of overall satisfaction include the following five customer service standards:

- 1) Return phone calls within 1 business day.
- 2) Provide final determination regarding registrability within 13 months.
- 3) Clear written communications of positions of examining attorneys.
- 4) Mail filing receipts within 14 days after receipt of application.
- 5) Treat you with courtesy each time you contact us.

Comparisons of 1995, 96, 98, & 99 Trademark Satisfaction Levels With USPTO's Performance Against Customer Standards

Trademark Standards	1995	1996	1998	1999
Overall satisfaction	64%	65%	63%	69%
Treat you with courtesy each time you contact us*	80%	80%	84%	87%
Direct you promptly to the proper office or person	58%	54%	63%	69%
Return telephone calls within 1 business day or provide another contact*	55%	44%	50%	59%
Set forth clearly in written communications, the technical, procedural, and legal position of examiners*	65%	68%	74%	77%
Respond to letters within 30 days of receipt	43%	32%	38%	47%
Widely disseminate information on changes in practices and procedures before their effective date	61%	60%	55%	61%
Mail correct filing notices within 14 days of receipt*	54%	38%	38%	33%
Provide first communication within 3 months	43%	27%	23%	29%
Mail Notice of Abandonment within 45 days	22%	23%	25%	42%
Notice of Publication within 30 days	39%	35%	43%	49%
Mail Certificates of Registration within 7 days	39%	41%	49%	51%
Determine registrability within 13 months*	39%	31%	37%	42%

* Indicates a key driver.

Note: USPTO converted to a 5-point scale with a neutral midpoint in 1999, so previous years' numbers have been adjusted to reflect that conversion.

The most notable increase from 1998 was "mailing notices of abandonment within 45 days," a 17% increase. Only one Trademark standard decreased in satisfaction

from 1998. "Mail correct filing receipts within 14 days of receipt" decreased 5%.

1999 Trademark Satisfaction Levels With USPTO's Performance Against Customer Standards



New Standards				1999
Mail applicant's return postcard within 3 days of filing				49%
Respond to Amendments within 35 days from mail room receipt				33%
Respond to Request to Divide within 30 days from mail room receipt date				27%
Respond to Statements of Use within 30 days from mail room receipt date				37%
Respond to Extension Requests within 30 days from mail room receipt date				40%
Respond to Section 7 Requests within 30 days from mail room receipt date				27%
Respond to Section 8 Requests within 30 days from mail room receipt date				31%
Respond to Section 9 Requests within 30 days from mail room receipt date				29%
Unclassified paper copies of the drawing pages of applications will be delivered to the Trademark Search Library within 3 days of filing				26%
Classified paper copies of the drawing pages of applications will be delivered to the Trademark Search Library within 11 days of filing				26%
Issue Filing Receipts with the correct information				50%
Issue Notices of Allowance with the correct information				75%
Issue Official Gazettes with the correct information				74%
Issue Notice of Abandonment with the correct information				73%

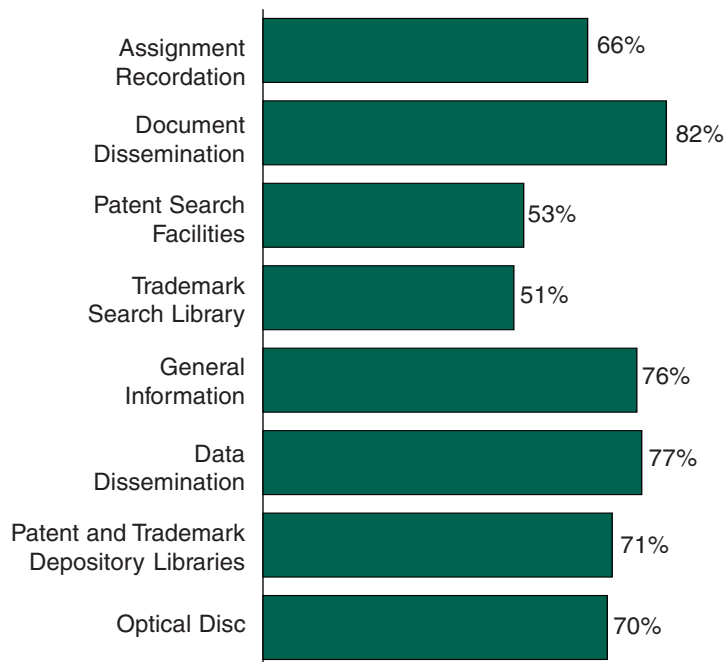
Comparisons of 1995, 96, 98, & 99 Trademark Satisfaction Levels With Trademark Process Categories

Trademark Process Category	1995	1996	1998	1999
Amount of time needed to submit required information	75%	83%	80%	82%
Clarity of instructions	72%	81%	79%	80%
Cost of Trademarks applications	42%	45%	56%	60%
Outcome met your objectives	70%	75%	67%	79%
Fairness of decision	67%	72%	63%	74%
Ability to provide accurate answers to questions	66%	68%	69%	72%
Clear explanation about procedures	61%	64%	65%	65%
Assistance at a time convenient to you	61%	68%	62%	67%
Prompt and helpful service	58%	63%	58%	64%
Flexibility in trying to address your needs	52%	54%	53%	60%
Handling of delays	37%	34%	19%	25%
Handling of mistakes	41%	39%	28%	36%
Overall courteousness	72%	78%	66%	74%
New for 1999				
Handling of issues related to goods and services by attorney				76%
Use of telephone to deal with examination issues				87%
Searches performed under 15 USC 1052d				64%
Refusals made under 15 USC 1052d				44%
Refusals made under 15 USC 1052e				40%
Consistency of examination				50%
Adequacy of explanation for office action				65%
Sufficiency of evidence supporting office action				55%
Efficiency of examination process				54%
Ease of electronic filing system				76%
Ease of use of the online form				81%
Clarification of instructions for filing electronically				80%
Ease of payment for electronically filed applications				85%
Ability to receive answers to questions				69%

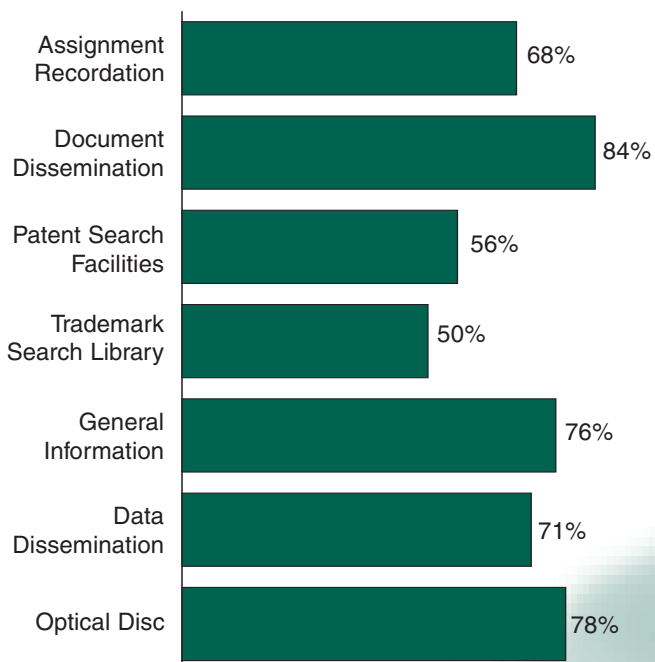
The most notable increases from 1998 relate to the categories “outcome met your objective,” an increase of 12% and “fairness of decision” an 11% increase. There were no significant declines in satisfaction in 1999.

Information Dissemination Organizations: 1999

1999 Overall Satisfaction With Products and Services (Overall Satisfaction 75%)



1999 Overall Satisfaction With Ease of Obtaining Patent and Trademark Information (Overall Satisfaction 77%)





U.S. Department of Commerce
Patent and Trademark Office
Washington, DC 20231